## IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 10, 13, 14 and 17 as shown below; cancel claim 4. All claims are provided for convenience.

1.    (Amended Herein) A method of providing version-specific information associated with a file stored in a computer system to an application, the method comprising:

receiving a request to create a version-specific attribute, wherein the attribute is associated with the file;

maintaining the version-specific attribute to reflect relevant updates to the file by automatically invalidating the version-specific information in response to a predetermined event, wherein the version-specific attribute comprises meta information and mask information, the mask information providing information related to which predetermined events invalidate the version-specific attribute;

receiving a request by the application to evaluate the version-specific attribute; and

providing the version specific information to the application in response to the request to evaluate the version specific attribute.

2.    (Original) A method as defined in claim 1 wherein the application is a virus scan application.

3.    (Original) A method as defined in claim 1 wherein the application is a replicator application.

4.    (Canceled Herein) A method as defined in claim 1 wherein the version-specific attribute comprises meta information and mask information, the mask information providing information related to which predetermined events invalidate the version-specific attribute.

5.    (Original) A method as defined in claim 1 wherein the predetermined event is an update to file data.

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6.    (Original) A method as defined in claim 1 further comprising:

providing mask information as part of the version-specific attribute; and

determining the predetermined event based on the mask information.

7.    (Original) A method of as defined in claim 1 wherein the method further comprises:

providing security information within the version-specific attribute.

8.    (Original) A method as defined in claim 1 wherein the invalidating act further comprises deleting the version-specific attribute.

9.    (Original) A computer program product readable by a computer and encoding instructions for executing the method recited in claim 1.

10.    (Amended Herein) A method of accessing a file stored in a computer system, the file having an associated version-specific attribute, wherein the version-specific attribute comprises meta information and mask information, the mask information providing information related to which predetermined events invalidate the version-specific attribute, said method comprising:

receiving an access attempt relating to an access request;

determining whether the access attempt relates to an invalidating access;

if the access attempt relates to an invalidating access:

invalidating the version-specific attribute;

performing the access operation related to the access request; and

if the access attempt does not relate to an invalidating access then performing the access operation related to the access request.

11.    (Original) A method of accessing a file as defined in claim 10 wherein if the access attempt does not relate to an invalidating access, then said method further comprises:

determining whether the access depends on the version specific attribute;

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if the access does not depend on the version specific attribute, then performing the access operation related to the access request;

if the access depends on the version specific attribute:

determining whether the attribute is valid;

performing a predetermined operation based on whether the attribute is determined to be valid.

12.    (Original) A computer program product readable by a computer and encoding instructions for executing the method recited in claim 10.

13.    (Amended Herein) A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure, wherein the data structure comprises:

an actual file data section containing actual file data;

a header section; and

a version specific attribute section, wherein the version-specific attribute section is created by a third party application and wherein the version-specific attribute comprises a meta information section and a mask information section, the mask information section providing information related to which predetermined events invalidate the version-specific attribute, and wherein the version-specific attribute is invalidated in response to a one of said predetermined events.

14.    (Amended Herein) A computer-readable medium as defined in claim 13 wherein the version-specific attribute comprises: a meta information section for storing stores the name of the attribute;, and wherein the version-specific attribute further comprises:

a version information section for storing information related to the version of the third party application used to create the version-specific application; and

a mask information section for storing information related to predetermined events for invalidating the version-specific attribute.

15.    (Previously Amended) A computer readable medium as defined in claim 14 wherein the third party application performs virus scanning functions and wherein the version information section stores information related to a virus definition file.

16.     (Previously Amended) A computer readable medium as defined in claim 14 wherein the predetermined event relates to a modification of the data structure.

17.     (Amended Herein) A computer program product readable by a computer and encoding instructions for executing a computer process for managing version-specific information for a file within a file system, said computer process comprising:

storing version-specific information as an attribute to create a version-specific attribute for the file, wherein the version-specific attribute comprises meta information and mask information, the mask information providing information related to which predetermined events invalidate the version-specific attribute; and

invalidating the version-specific attribute in response to a predetermined access attempt.

18.     (Original) A computer program product as defined in claim 17 the computer comprises a file system and the acts of storing and invalidating are performed by the file system.

19.     (Original) A computer program product as defined in claim 17 wherein the version-specific information relates to third party application information.

20.     (Original) A computer program product as defined in claim 19 wherein the third party application performs virus scanning functions and wherein the predetermined access attempt relates to a modification of the file.

21.     (Original) A computer program product as defined in claim 20 wherein the version-specific attribute remains following one of the following access attempts: copy, rename or backup.